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EPA sets out rules for proposed 'methane fee' for waste generated by oil and natural gas companies

By **MATTHEW DALY**
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Oil and natural gas companies for the first time would have to pay a fee for methane emissions that exceed certain levels under a rule proposed Friday by the Biden administration.

The proposed Environmental Protection Agency rule follows through on a directive from Congress included in the 2022 climate law. The new fee is intended to encourage industry to adopt best practices that reduce emissions of methane and thereby avoid paying. Methane is a climate "super pollutant" that is more potent in the short term than carbon dioxide and is responsible for about one-third of greenhouse gas emissions. The oil and natural gas sector is the largest industrial source of methane emissions in the United States, and advocates say reduction of methane emissions is an important way to slow climate change.



A flare burns natural gas at an oil well Aug. 26, 2021, in Waford City, N.D.

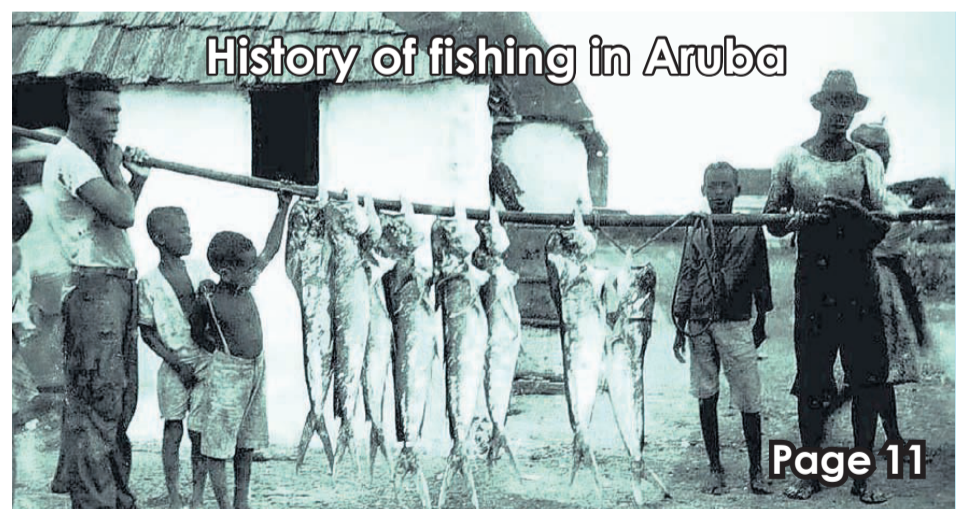
Continued on Page 2

Associated Press
Page 2



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Page 8



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Page 11

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EPA sets out rules for proposed 'methane fee' for waste generated by oil and natural gas companies

Continued from Front

Excess methane produced this year would result in a fee of \$900 per ton, with fees rising to \$1,500 per ton by 2026. EPA Administrator Michael Regan said the proposed fee would work in tandem with a final rule on methane emissions EPA announced last month. The fee, formally known as the Methane Emissions Reduction Program, will encourage early deployment of available technologies to reduce methane emissions and other harmful air pollutants before the new standards take effect, he said.

The rule announced in December includes a two-year phase-in period for companies to eliminate routine flaring of natural gas from new oil wells.

"EPA is delivering on a comprehensive strategy to reduce wasteful methane emissions that endanger communities and fuel the climate crisis," Regan said in a statement. When finalized later this year, the proposed methane fee will set technology standards that will "incentivize industry innovation" and spur action to reduce pollution, he said. Leading oil and gas companies already meet or exceed performance levels set by Congress under the climate law, meaning they will not have to pay the proposed fee, Regan and other officials said.

Sen. Tom Carper, chairman of the Senate Environment



Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Michael Regan appears before the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology on Capitol Hill, Sept. 27, 2023 in Washington. Associated Press

and Public Works Committee, said he was pleased the administration was moving forward with the methane fee as directed by Congress. "We know methane is over 80 times more potent than carbon dioxide at trapping heat in our atmosphere in the short term," said Carper, D-Del. He said the program "will incentivize producers to cut wasteful and excessive methane emissions during oil and gas production."

New Jersey Rep. Frank Pallone, the top Democrat on the House Energy and Commerce Committee, said oil and gas companies have long calculated that it's cheaper

to waste methane through flaring and other techniques than to make necessary upgrades to prevent leaks.

"Wasted methane never makes its way to consumers, but they are nevertheless stuck with the bill," Pallone said. The proposed methane fee "will ensure consumers no longer pay for wasted energy or the harm its emissions can cause."

Republicans call the methane fee a tax that could raise the price of natural gas. "This proposal means increased costs for employers and higher energy bills for millions of Americans," said Sen. Shelley Moore Capito,

R-West Virginia.

The American Petroleum Institute, the oil and gas industry's largest lobbying group, slammed the proposal Friday and called for Congress to repeal it.

"As the world looks to U.S. energy producers to provide stability in an increasingly unstable world, this punitive tax increase is a serious misstep that undermines America's energy advantage," said Dustin Meyer, API's senior vice president of policy, economics and regulatory affairs. While the group supports "smart" federal methane regulation, the EPA proposal "creates an incoherent,

confusing regulatory regime that will only stifle innovation and undermine our ability to meet rising energy demand," Meyer said. "We look forward to working with Congress to repeal the IRA's misguided new tax on American energy." Fred Krupp, president of the Environmental Defense Fund, called the proposed fee "common sense," adding that oil and gas companies should be held accountable for methane pollution, a primary source of global warming.

In a related development, EPA said it is working with industry and others to improve how methane emissions are reported, citing numerous studies showing that oil and gas companies have significantly underreported their methane emissions to the EPA under the agency's Greenhouse Gas Reporting Program.

The climate law, formally known as the Inflation Reduction Act, established a waste-emissions charge for methane from oil and gas facilities that report emissions of more than 25,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent per year to the EPA. The proposal announced Friday sets out details of how the fee will be implemented, including how exemptions will be applied.

The agency said it expects that over time, fewer oil and gas sites will be charged as they reduce their emissions in compliance with the rule. □



Former baseball MVP Steve Garvey, right, talks to Valerie Hunnicutt, who is homeless, during a visit to the Skid Row area of Los Angeles, Thursday, Jan. 11, 2024.

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Supreme Court agreed Friday to review lower-court

rulings that make it harder for cities in the western United States to prevent peo-

The Supreme Court will decide whether local anti-homeless laws are 'cruel and unusual'

ple from sleeping on the streets when there aren't enough beds in homeless shelters.

The justices will hear an appeal from the city of Grants Pass, in southwest Oregon, that has the backing of California Gov. Gavin Newsom, a Democrat, as well as other Democratic and Republican elected officials who have struggled to deal with homelessness brought on by rising housing costs and income inequality. The

court's action comes a day after a panel of the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals affirmed a lower-court ruling blocking anti-camping ordinances in San Francisco, where Newsom once was the mayor.

A separate 9th circuit panel ruled in the Oregon case that Grants Pass could not enforce local ordinances that prohibit homeless people "from using a blanket, pillow, or cardboard box for protection from the el-

ements." The decision applies across nine western states, Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon and Washington.

The two rulings, like a 2018 decision from the 9th circuit in a case from Boise, Idaho, found that punishing people for sleeping on the streets when no alternative shelter is available amounts to "cruel and unusual punishment" in violation of the Constitution. □

Some Americans will get their student loans canceled in February as Biden accelerates his new plan

By COLLIN BINKLEY
AP Education Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Biden administration will start canceling student loans for some borrowers in February as part of a new repayment plan that's taking effect nearly six months ahead of schedule.

Loan forgiveness was originally set to begin in July under the new SAVE repayment plan, but it's being accelerated to provide faster relief to borrowers, President Joe Biden said Friday. It's part of an effort "to act as quickly as possible to give more borrowers breathing room" and move on from their student debt, the Democratic president said in a statement.

Borrowers will be eligible for cancellation if they are enrolled in the new SAVE plan, if they originally borrowed \$12,000 or less to attend college, and if they have made at least 10 years of payments. The Education Department said it didn't immediately know how many borrowers will be eligible for cancellation



President Joe Biden speaks on student loan debt forgiveness, in the Roosevelt Room of the White House, Oct. 4, 2023, in Washington.

in February.

Biden announced the new repayment plan last year alongside a separate plan to cancel up to \$20,000 in loans for millions of Americans. The Supreme Court struck down his plan for widespread forgiveness, but the repayment plan has so far escaped that

level of legal scrutiny. Republicans in Congress tried unsuccessfully to block the new repayment plan through legislation and a resolution last year.

The accelerated forgiveness drew fire from Republicans, who called it an attempt to win voters ahead of the 2024 presidential

election. North Carolina Republican Rep. Virginia Foxx, chairwoman of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce, said it will "dump even more kerosene on an already raging student debt fire."

The new repayment plan offers far more generous terms than several other

income-driven repayment plans that it's meant to replace. Previous plans offered cancellation after 20 or 25 years of payments, while the new plan offers it in as little as 10. The new plan also lowers monthly payments for millions of borrowers. Those who took out more than \$12,000 will be eligible for cancellation but on a longer timeline. For each \$1,000 borrowed beyond \$12,000, it adds an additional year of payments on top of 10 years.

The maximum repayment period is capped at 20 years for those with only undergraduate loans and 25 years for those with any graduate school loans.

The Biden administration says next month's relief will particularly help Americans who attended community colleges, which generally cost less than four-year universities. The plan aims to place community college students "on a faster track to debt forgiveness than ever before," Education Secretary Miguel Cardona said. □

Associated Press

IRS says it collected \$360 million more from rich tax cheats as its funding is threatened yet again

By FATIMA HUSSEIN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The IRS says it has collected an additional \$360 million in overdue taxes from delinquent millionaires as the agency's leadership tries to promote the latest work it has done to modernize the agency with Inflation Reduction Act funding that Republicans are threatening to chip away. Leadership from the federal tax collector held a call with reporters Thursday to give updates on how the agency has used a portion of the tens of billions of dollars allocated to the agency through Democrats' Inflation Reduction Act, signed into law in August 2022.

Along with the \$122 million

collected from delinquent millionaires last October, now nearly half a billion dollars in back taxes from rich tax cheats has been recouped, IRS leaders say. The announcement comes as the IRS braces for a more severe round of funding cuts.

The agency cuts previously agreed upon by the White House and congressional Republicans in the debt ceiling and budget cuts package passed by Congress last year which included \$20 billion rescinded from the IRS over two years would be front-loaded as part of the overall spending package for the current fiscal year that could help avoid a partial government shutdown later this month.

IRS Commissioner Daniel Werfel said that "the impact of the rescission that's being discussed as part of the current budget will not impact our efforts until the later years."

He said the agency would still spend its now-\$60 billion allocation over the next 10 years and spread the need for more funding into later years.

"Our intent is to spend the money to have maximum impact in helping taxpayers," he said, "to have maximum impact now and in the immediate future."

"My hope is that as we demonstrate the positive impact that IRA funding is having for all taxpayers, that there will be a need and a desire amongst policymakers at that time to

restore IRS funding so that we can continue the momentum that's having a very positive impact," Werfel said.

As of December, the IRS says it opened 76 examinations into the largest

partnerships in the U.S. that include hedge funds, real estate investment partnerships and large law firms.

"It's clear the Inflation Reduction Act funding is making a difference for taxpayers," Werfel said. □



The exterior of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) building in Washington on March 22, 2013.

Associated Press

Prosecutors to seek death penalty for white supremacist who killed 10 at Buffalo supermarket

By **CAROLYN THOMPSON**
Associated Press

BUFFALO, N.Y. (AP) — Federal prosecutors said Friday that they will seek the death penalty against a white supremacist who killed 10 Black people at a Buffalo supermarket.

Payton Gendron, 20, is already serving a sentence of life in prison with no chance of parole after he pleaded guilty to state charges of murder and hate-motivated domestic terrorism in the 2022 attack.

New York does not have capital punishment, but the Justice Department had the option of seeking the death penalty in a separate federal hate crimes case. Gendron had promised to plead guilty in that case if prosecutors agreed not to seek the death penalty. The decision marks the first time that President Joe Biden's Justice Department has authorized a new pursuit of the death penalty.

Gendron drove more than 200 miles (320 kilometers) from his home in rural Conklin, New York, to a Tops Friendly Market in Buffalo's largely Black East Side neighborhood, where he shot eight supermarket customers, the store security guard and a church deacon who drove shoppers to and from the store with their groceries. Three people were wounded but survived. In court papers



Payton Gendron, center, listens as he is sentenced to life in prison without parole for domestic terrorism motivated by hate and each of the 10 counts of first-degree murder, in an Erie County court room, in Buffalo, N.Y., Feb 15, 2023.

announcing the decision to seek the death penalty, Trini Ross, the U.S. attorney for western New York, cited the substantial planning that went into the shooting, including the choice of location, which she said was meant to "maximize the number of Black victims." Relatives of the victims who ranged in age from 32 to 86 have expressed mixed views on whether they thought federal prosecutors should pursue the death penalty. Mark Talley, whose 63-year-old mother, Geraldine Talley, was killed, said he "wasn't necessarily

disappointed" by the decision, even if he would have preferred Gendron spend his life behind bars.

"It would have satisfied me more knowing he would have spent the rest of his life in prison being surrounded by the population of people he tried to kill," Talley said.

In a joint statement, attorneys for some of victims' relatives said the decision "provides a pathway to both relief and a measure of closure for the victims and their families."

An attorney for Gendron, Sonya Zoghlin, said she was

"deeply disappointed" by the government's decision to seek the death penalty, noting that her client was 18 at the time of the shooting. "Rather than a prolonged and traumatic capital prosecution, the efforts of the federal government would be better spent on combatting the forces that facilitated this terrible crime, including easy access to deadly weapons and the failure of social media companies to moderate the hateful rhetoric and images that circulate online," Zoghlin said in a statement. Fed-

Associated Press

eral death penalty cases have become a rarity since the election of Biden, a Democrat who opposes capital punishment. Under the leadership of Attorney General Merrick Garland, the Justice Department has permitted the continuation of two capital prosecutions and withdrawn from pursuing death in more than two dozen cases.

Garland instituted a moratorium on federal executions in 2021 pending a review of procedures. Although the moratorium does not prevent prosecutors from seeking death sentences, the Justice Department has done so sparingly. It successfully sought the death penalty for an antisemitic gunman who murdered 11 people at a Pittsburgh synagogue, though that attack was authorized as a death penalty case before Garland took office. It also went ahead last year with an effort to get the death sentence against an Islamic extremist who killed eight people on a New York City bike path, though a lack of a unanimous jury meant that prosecution resulted in a life sentence.

The Justice Department has declined to pursue the death penalty in other mass killings, including against the gunman who killed 23 people at a Walmart in El Paso, Texas. □



The Austin Police Department investigates the crime scene after an Austin police officer died following a shooting in South Austin, Texas on Saturday, Nov. 11, 2023.

Associated Press

By **LINDSAY WHITEHURST**
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The

number of police officers who died on the job dropped again last year, including

Number of police officer deaths dropped last year, report finds

deaths from gunfire, traffic accidents and COVID-19, according to a new report released Thursday.

A total of 136 U.S. police officers died in the line of duty in 2023, the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund year-end report found. That's a decrease of about 39% from the year before, when 224 officers died, and continues a downward trend after police deaths hit an all-time high of 586 in 2021, largely driven by the

coronavirus.

"Just in the last two or three years, we've posted some really, really big, alarming numbers in terms of overall officer deaths each year," said Bill Alexander, the Memorial Fund's executive director.

"This year, for the first time in a while, we're down in almost every category."

A total of 47 officers died after being shot in the line of duty, down 25% from the year before. Still, another re-

port from the National Fraternal Order of Police found the number of officers struck by gunfire was at a high of 378, showing that firearm danger remains serious even as trauma care and gear like bullet-resistant vests have advanced in saving lives, Alexander said.

Officers killed in traffic crashes dropped 27% compared with the year before. Five deaths were related to COVID-19, compared with 74 in 2022. □

People's rights are threatened everywhere, from wars to silence about abuses, rights group says

By EDITH M. LEDERER
Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — People's rights are being suppressed and threatened everywhere in the world, from wars to selective government outrage about some abuses and silence about others because of "political expediency," a leading human rights group said Thursday. "We only have to look at the human rights challenges of 2023 to tell us what we need to do differently in 2024," Human Rights Watch said in its annual global report.

Armed conflicts have mushroomed, leading with the Israel-Hamas war, and the issue is how governments respond to them, Tirana Hassan, the New York-based watchdog's executive director, told a news conference. "It needs to be an end to double standards."

As an example, she said many governments quickly and justifiably condemned the "unlawful" killings and atrocities by the Palestinian militant Hamas group



Palestinians mourn their relatives, including kids killed in the Israeli bombardment of the Gaza Strip, outside a morgue in Rafah, southern Gaza, Thursday, Jan. 11, 2024.

when it attacked southern Israel on Oct. 7, killing hundreds and taking hostages. After the attacks, Israel "unlawfully blocked" aid to Gaza residents and its ongoing offensive in the territory has killed more than 23,000 people, according to the Health Ministry in the Hamas-run Gaza

Strip, while reducing entire neighborhoods to rubble. "Yet many of the governments that condemned Hamas' war crimes have been muted in responding to the war crimes committed by the Israeli government," Hassan said. She said such selective outrage sends a danger-

ous message that some people's lives matter more than others and shakes the legitimacy of the international rules that protect everyone's human rights, she said.

Human Rights Watch praised South Africa for seeking a ruling from the International Court of Justice

on whether Israel is committing genocide in Gaza in a landmark case that began Thursday.

Hassan said other countries including the United States should support South Africa's action "and ensure that Israel complies with the court's decision."

The HRW report said tradeoffs on human rights in the name of politics are also clear. It cited the failure of many governments to speak out about the Chinese government's repression and control over civil society, the internet and media.

"Chinese authorities' cultural persecution and arbitrary detention of a million Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslims amount to crimes against humanity," it said. "Yet many governments, including in predominantly Muslim countries, stay silent."

The report described the United States and European Union as ignoring their human rights obligations in favor of politically expedient solutions. □

Associated Press

Former Suriname dictator vanishes after being sentenced in killings of 15 political opponents

By GEROLD ROZENBLAD
Associated Press

PARAMARIBO, Suriname (AP) — Former Suriname dictator Desi Bouterse, who was sentenced to 20 years

in prison last month for the killings of 15 political opponents, has vanished after not turning himself in to authorities on Friday as planned.

His wife, Ingrid Bouterse-Waldring, told reporters that she did not know where he was and firmly stated, "He's not going to jail!"

"I haven't seen or spoken to him for a few days," she said as she lashed out at judicial authorities for the conviction, claiming it was politically motivated.

Meanwhile, dozens of backers of Bouterse and the National Democratic Party he chairs arrived at his house to show their support as some yelled at journalists and played loud music, prompting government officials to tighten security measures.

"All necessary steps will be taken to ensure that the safety of both those involved and the wider so-

ciety is guaranteed," the government said in a statement.

Spokesman Ricardo Panka said the party disagrees with the sentencing and noted that Bouterse will remain as chairman. But he said the crowd was ordered to remain calm.

"We are not going to create an angry mob to go against the authorities," he said.

Bouterse was sentenced on Dec. 20 after being found guilty in the 1982 killings, ending a historic 16-year legal process.

He had previously been sentenced in 2019 and 2021 but appealed both rulings.

A new team of lawyers filed an appeal Monday against

the sentencing on grounds that an amnesty law Bouterse unsuccessfully tried to push through more than a decade ago would apply, but Suriname's attorney general rejected the move on Tuesday.

On Wednesday, authorities ordered Bouterse and four others convicted in the case to report to various prisons by Friday. Only three have done so.

Bouterse led a bloodless coup to become dictator from 1980 to 1987. During that time, he and two dozen other suspects were accused of executing prominent people including lawyers, journalists and a university professor at a colonial fortress in the capital of Paramaribo. □



Ingrid Bouterse-Waldring, wife of Suriname's former President Desi Bouterse is surrounded by supporters as she speaks to the press outside her home in Paramaribo, Suriname, Friday, Jan. 12, 2024.

Associated Press

Myanmar's military says it and ethnic guerrilla groups have agreed to an immediate cease-fire

BEIJING (AP) — Myanmar's military has reached a cease-fire agreement with an alliance of ethnic minority guerrilla groups it has been battling in the country's northeast, the Chinese Foreign Ministry said Friday. Myanmar's military government confirmed the development, as did the ethnic alliance.

The agreement was brokered at talks mediated by China on Wednesday and Thursday in Kunming, a Chinese provincial capital about 400 kilometers (250 miles) from the border with Myanmar, Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said.

"China hopes the relevant parties in Myanmar can conscientiously implement the agreement, exercise maximum restraint toward each other and solve the issues through dialogue and consultations," she said at a daily briefing in Beijing.

Maj. Gen. Zaw Min Tun, the spokesperson of Myanmar's ruling military council, said in an audio note



A man looks on at homes destroyed after air and artillery strikes in Mung Lai Hkyet displacement camp, in Laiza, Myanmar, Tuesday Oct. 10, 2023.

to journalists that the two sides had met in Kunming and after talks, agreed on a temporary cease-fire agreement.

"We will continue discussions. We will continue to work for the strengthening of the cease-fire," Zaw Min Tun said.

A previous cease-fire pact

reached in mid-December was not honored by either side.

Chinese spokesperson Mao said the military and the Three Brotherhood Alliance which comprises the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army, the Ta'ang National Liberation Army and the Arakan Army

agreed to an immediate cease-fire, the disengaging of military personnel and the settlement of their disputes through negotiations. "The two sides promised not to undermine the safety of Chinese people living in the border area and Chinese projects and personnel in Myanmar," she said.

Associated Press

The Three Brotherhood Alliance on Friday night issued a statement on the Telegram messaging platform detailing what it called the Haigeng Agreement, apparently named after the Kunming hotel where China has hosted cease-fire talks.

It said the cease-fire began Thursday at 9 p.m. local time and committed both sides to avoiding confrontations and employing dialogue to resolve disputes, especially regarding the use of arms.

The alliance pledged not to attack encampments and outposts of the military government, which reciprocated by agreeing not to try to launch attacks using artillery and airstrikes, said the statement.

However, a separate statement issued by the Ta'ang National Liberation Army said the military on Friday fired heavy weapons into villages in four townships where its guerrillas were operating. □

Japan successfully launches an intelligence-gathering satellite to watch for North Korean missiles

By MARI YAMAGUCHI
Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — Japan successfully launched a rocket carrying a government intelligence-gathering satellite Friday on a mission to watch movements at military sites in North Korea and to improve responses to natural disasters.

The H2A rocket, launched by Mitsubishi Heavy Industries Ltd., lifted off from the Tanegashima Space Center in southwestern Japan, carrying the optical satellite as part of Tokyo's reconnaissance effort to rapidly build up its military capability.

The government's Cabinet Satellite Intelligence Center and MHI declared the launch a success, saying that the Optical-8 satellite was successfully separated

from the rocket and entered its planned orbit.

The optical satellite can capture detailed images, though its capability is limited in severe weather. Japan began the intelligence-gathering satellite

program after a North Korean missile flew over Japan in 1998. Japan aims to set up a network of 10 satellites, including those carrying radars that can operate at night or in severe weather, to spot and



An H2A rocket is lifted from the launch pad at Tanegashima Space Center in Kagoshima, southern Japan Friday, Jan. 12, 2024.

Associated Press

provide early warning for possible missile launches. Applauding the successful launch, Hiroki Yasuda, a senior official at the Cabinet Satellite Intelligence Center, told reporters that the Optical-8 is crucial to Japan's information-gathering capability.

"With the security environment surrounding Japan becoming increasingly severe and uncertain and growing natural disaster risks, intelligence satellites are crucial for foreign affairs, defense and security as well as disaster response purposes," Yasuda said. "We need to steadily reinforce our intelligence capability."

It will take several months for the satellite to start supplying information, Yasuda said.

Yasuda said the existing network of intelligence satellites, including those used beyond operational life, captured images of quake-hit western Japan for disaster response purposes. The New Year's Day temblors killed 215 people and caused extensive damages to buildings, roads and lifeline.

Prime Minister Fumio Kishida's government, under its national security strategy adopted in 2022, is pushing to deploy long-range U.S.-made Tomahawk and other cruise missiles as early as next year to build up more strike capability, breaking from the country's exclusively self-defense-only postwar principle, citing rapid weapons advancement in China and North Korea. □

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How it all began

It was 1938 when Mr. Eric Ponson started his journey at General Store. Ponson did not hesitate and decided to buy General Store. Buying a store and thus going from employee to owner of a business with a debt of 11.000 guilders was not an easy task.

As the saying goes: "Behind every successful man, is a strong woman". In the case of Ponson, this was no different. As General Store progressed and slowly became successful, Mrs. Irene Ponson, came in to assist her husband. Irene Ponson is a visionary, she knew exactly where and how to invest and within a short amount of time in 1970, General Store moved to a better location at the Steenweg. This allowed for a lot more merchandise, products and employees. Supply and demand was as such, that General Store became the number 1 electrical business. Business kept going so well that the location at the Steenweg became too small and was moved later to Dakota Shopping Paradise and later to Pedro Gallego Straat. With this move, an expansion was decided upon and an electronics store in Savaneta was opened. General Store still being very successful was ready for more growth.

Ricky, Kenneth, Corine and Frans are the fruits of this marriage. Kenneth and Frans however, decided to further develop their father's legacy and continued with their mother's dream to expand the business. An expansion not in square feet only, but in merchandise as well. A great opportunity presented itself when the Ponson family was able to buy a piece of property across from the airport. In 2007 the Ponson family moved into their brand new and huge building. Ponson's General Store now had an electrical department, as housewares department, a paint department and a hardware department.

After a successful opening and expansion,



Kenneth and Frans who inherited their mother's vision, decided that General Store was ready for yet another expansion. With the support of Mr. Tom Barfell and management of Do it Best in the States, the construction of Do it Center commenced.

Fast forward to today. A Do it Center in Aruba, with more than 50.000 top of the line items for interior as well exterior use, building materials, STO products and a top of the line grocery store. Perseverance, responsibility, vision and the courage to invest have made Ponson's General Store as successful as it is today.

Super Do It Center Shaba & Groceries

Located in Shaba, Noord. This is the last sibling of the Do It Center family. Here you will be able to find anything you are looking for. The building is divided into several departments from home to hardware to groceries. Everything under one roof.

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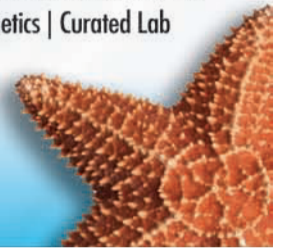
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promotional purposes without compensation. Last but not least: check out our website, Instagram and Facebook page! Thank you for supporting our free newspaper, we strive to make you a happy reader every day again. For today we received a lovely message from Cami Johnson.

She wrote to us saying: "Aruba to me is love, romance, rest and restoration."

Thank you for sending us this wonderful message sharing what Aruba means to you with us and our readers! ☐

Visit the island's hidden natural pools

(Oranjestad)—Amongst the countless beaches surrounding the island that are well-known and frequently visited, there are an additional two "hidden" natural pools that are situated in the northern coast of the island, two ideal stops in your tour itinerary.

Conchi (Natural Pool)

For many years, Conchi was the only natural pool that we had on the island. Located in the Arikok National Park, near Boca Keto and the Daimari Ranch, Conchi—

also known "Cura di Turtuga (Turtle's Cove) or just Natural Pool—is reachable with any 4x4 vehicle or by foot if you're up for a long hike. However, since it is part of the National Park, you must first get permission from park management to enter. You would have to purchase a day pass, and receive a wristband as proof of payment. Once you've completed that, you are set!

If you decide to hike from the entrance of the Arikok

National Park, this is also possible: do bring plenty of protective clothing and enough water and food—it could take you up to three hours to hike there! However, when you eventually do get there, you will be greeted with crystal blue water surrounded by a natural rock formation that protects you from the wild waves on the other side. Though the pool is located on the northern side of the island (where the sea is largely rough and largely no suitable for swimming), the pool itself is very calm. It's also relatively deep, and you can climb up the rocks and jump in!

Cave Pool

This relatively new pool appeared just a few years ago, when a part of the dried up coral floor broke off and created a partition between the ocean and what is now the natural pool that is hidden there. Because it's still



so new, there is no official name for it, but most people just call it the cave pool.

Just like the Conchi, the new natural pool is situated on the northern coast of Aruba. However, this pool is much easier to reach with any type of vehicle, and there is no hiking needed. This spot has also become a regular stop for touring visitors.

When you get there, maybe you won't be able to spot the pool immediately, because you will probably notice the moon-shaped

lagoon where wild northern waves crash into each other. Sounds scary, but if you look down on your right, you'll see a calm, crystal blue little pool in the corner. To get there, you have to climb down some stairs. Be careful when climbing down and follow the instructions of your tour guide if you have one.

And just like Conchi, this pool also has a jumping spot, and a rope to climb back up the boulder.

Picture of cave pool is credited to RockaBeach Tours



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Aruban snacks and where to find them



While you're at it, why not accompany your snack with a refreshing "batido"? Batidos are fruit shakes, typically made with added milk for some creaminess. However, you can also ask to hold the milk. Batidos are commonly found in snack shops too. You may find some batido shops next the flea markets downtown, or if you're on your way to San Nicolas, at Mauchi Smoothies and Juice Bar in Savaneta (located at the side of the main road).

If you are looking for something a bit more fresh and healthy, why not try some coconuts, or shaved ice from local vendors? These vendors carry their little shop at the back of their truck, so they are ever-moving around the island. However, there are a few spots

where you can almost always find a coconut/shaved ice vendor:

1. Right next to the Red Anchor in San Nicolas, on the way to Baby Beach.
2. Along the main road next to the airport field.
3. At the California Light House.
4. At the Alto Vista Chapel.

These vendors may also sell other delights, like the beloved coconut-based dessert "cocada" or peanuts. All in all, in Aruba, you can always find some place to take a break and have a bite of something local, you maybe just might have to look for them!

Photo credit: wheninaruba.com



ORANJESTAD — Want to taste something different for a change? How about some Aruban snacks that you can find all around the island? Hop in your car, and go to these locations to find some of the most popular and tasty snacks that are beloved by our locals.

One of the staples of Aruban cuisine and snacks is the Pastechi. Pastechi is a Caribbean fried pastry that is filled with cheese, meat, chicken, veggies and sometimes even fish! Or perhaps you might want to try a croquette, locally called a "kroket," which is a crusty fried snack with typically a meat and dough mix filling. The Aruban kroket is based on its Dutch counterpart, the "bitterbal".

These two snacks are typically found in all local snack trucks, which can be found all over the island, including on the side of the main road that stretches from San Nicolas to the Hotel Area. You can also find pastechis and kroker at local bakeries and snack shops, like Bright Bakery in Piedra Plat, Huchada in Santa Cruz or Pastechi House in the city center. These places may also sell other snacks and sandwiches too, perfect for on-the-road lunch break.

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The district of Savaneta

A quick history guide to the island's first capital

(Oranjestad)—Before Oranjestad became the island nation's capital, Aruba's first capital was the district of Savaneta. Here is where the cultural identity of Aruba was born, and from where the rest of the island developed into what it is today.

Savaneta is said to have been the first place where the Caquetio inhabitants first stepped foot on the island. Though there isn't hard evidence to back this up, but considering the legend of the Cacique Arua, it is believed that there were already movements on Aruba—and Savaneta—around 88 AD.

The Caquetios probably made their way to the island either from Venezuela, Colombia or other Caribbean islands in the region, but with good weather it was relatively easy for them to travel back and forth in their canoes. So, since the Caquetios discovered the island, Aruba found her first form of civilization.

It wasn't until 1499 when Aruba met another group of people who set foot on the island: the Spanish explorer Alonso de Ojeda. De Ojeda first took notice of Aruba off the coast of Venezuela, during his exploration of the Latin American country. This was on August 9th, 1499. However, de Ojeda didn't actually sail to the island till 4 days later, on August 23rd, 1499. This was the beginning of the Spanish era on Aruba (1499-1636).

Alonso usually didn't stop at every island or land he saw, especially not in the Caribbean. He would often take notice of land from afar and continue sailing. However,



Alonso de Ojeda

Aruba was an exception. He had heard that there were "quebracho" trees on the island, which were commonly used to produce dye or paint. But since these trees could not be found in Savaneta, he continued to search in the area of what is now known as Santa Cruz. The best way to transport the tree barks was via a route passing through Savaneta, and so the first road between Savaneta and Santa Cruz was made.

The Dutch colonial era (1636-1805)

During the 80-year war between The Netherlands and Spain, Dutch explorers and merchants began to travel to the ABC islands. Once they landed in Aruba, they deported the small Arawakan and Spanish community that was living on the island. This was the beginning of colonization of the ABC islands by the Dutch empire. Around the same, the West Indian Company (WIC) was born. Bonaire and Curacao were mostly used for plantations, where the Dutch had transported slaves from Africa. Aruba, on the other hand, was mostly used to raise cattle and to house the haring factory. The Dutch had often forced the indigenous community to work for them.

In 1636, when the Netherlands won the war against Spain, the country surrendered the islands to the Dutch.

The Dutch administration appointed the island's first commander, an Irish man named N. Williams. Because the Dutch were interested in other Caribbean islands and countries in South America, they imported Dutch merchants and business



Commandeursbaai (Commander's Bay) at Savaneta

men, all of whom resided in Savaneta. This way, Savaneta officially became the island's first capital.

However, at the end of the 18th century, the commander at the time, J.R. Lauffer, moved his office to what is now "Horse Bay" in Oranjestad. Because the highest office on the island moved away from Savaneta, the capital lost its title to what was called then Playa.

How Savaneta got its name

The name Savaneta probably has a Spanish origin. It was said that when the Spanish climbed a hill called Yara, they saw that the area was mostly open and had no big trees. In Spanish, such a land area is called a "sabana".

Because of its land surface, Sava-

neta was a great place to construct cattle farms. From here, the farmer culture on Aruba was born. Before the Aruban Gold Rush and the construction of the Refinery in San Nicolas, most residents were farmers, and Savaneta had many inhabitants that farmed fruits and vegetables. They also continued the tradition of raising cattle, like goat, sheep, pigs and horses. Savaneta was one of the first places on the island to have a general farming culture. From this culture, many other traditions were born, like the Dera Gay Holiday that we celebrate every year on June 24th. □

Source: Historia di Savaneta (History of Savaneta) by Adolf "Duffi" Kock.



"Quebracho" (Kibrahacha) tree; used to make dye and paint

History of fishing in Aruba

ORANJESTAD — Fishing has been a family tradition for ages in Aruba. Our ancestors used to fish for a living. Even though nowadays you don't see them often we still have some passionate fishermen on the island that go out every day in search for fish to feed their families and serve our local market. One of these fishermen is Gregory Wernet.

The so-called Continental Bank between Aruba and the opposite coast reaches a depth of about 650 feet. The sea is very rich in fish here. Since the time of the indigenous native people fish and other sea creatures such as turtles, octopus squids, conch and many type of crustaceans have formed a means of subsistence for the native Aruban inhabitants. Especially along the west coast of the island where the fishing grounds are settlements of fishermen. Until the arrival of the oil industry Aruban fishermen could supply Aruba's wants.

As a source of income, however, fishing did not amount too much. In the beginning of the 1900's approximately 160 people earn their living in this branch of this industry. Rancho, which stands for a shed, nowadays east Oranjestad, was the head

quarter and remains the fishermen's settlement. Savaneta, Noord, Santa Cruz all had their fishermen's villages. At a rough estimate there were about a hundred small fishing boats during that time.

The Arubans were mainly engaged in coastal fishing, using rowing-boats or small sailing-boats, and lines or dragnets and canisters in shallow water. When fishing with deep-sea lines just over the bottom of the sea the boat is kept in place by means of a piece of rock serving as an anchor. The two most important species of fish by far caught in this manner are the pargo or red snappers and a variety of groupers like the mero, jeanpao and the wowo di boyo.

Cruising off the coast the Aruban fisherman patiently waits for a fish willing to snap at the bait on the drag-line, in nets and traps. Veritable giants are sometimes caught. Barracudas weigh from 9 to 44 pounds and measure from 3 to almost 7 feet. The king-fish has a weight from 22 to 44 pounds; the moclat may tip the scales at 155, whilst garfish, having a length of nine feet, weigh over 132 pounds.

Most fish caught is used for their own consumption,



to feed their families and some are being sold in the market to local restaurants. Fisherman Gregory Wernet Gregory Wernet is a well-known fisherman from Santa Cruz. His father taught him fishing when he was a small child. Gregory has two sons, Jordan and Jordanny, which he taught fishing too, when they were only 3 years old and he takes them fishing with him. Fishing has been a family tradition for quite a long time and even his grandson Willvion of 7 years old is following his grandfather steps. This is the sixth generation of fishermen in their family.

They go deep sea fishing. There they catch red snap-

per, grouper and amberjack. They usually fish for 15 hours a day, but now due to the covid-19 measurements they go fishing from 5 in the morning until 8 o'clock at night or even sometimes from 8 at night till 5 in the morning. The day before they prepare all their fishing tools such as the Lines, lures, spears, and load their boat with fishing reels, batteries, fill the gasoline tank, lights and some food and beverages. For bait he uses sardines, squid and the small fish known in Aruba as piskechi. The have two boats they use for fishing. 'Virgen del Valle' which is parked at the pier by the Seaport and 'Padrot' which they have

at home. The fish they catch they take home to their families and they also sell it to their clients. Gregory is proud to be a fisherman. It is a honest and humble job but with it he is able to feed his family even during hard times. It is a very dangerous job and you have to spend many hours on the sea, waiting patiently and risking your life while fighting a big fish and big waves but the adrenaline it brings with it but also just sitting there listening to the sound of the waves and enjoying the marvelous view that nature has to offer is all worth it.

Source: Etnia Nativa



CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

D	A	T	E	S		P	R	I	S	M
I	D	Y	L	L		R	I	C	C	I
P	A	R	M	A		E	T	H	A	N
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D	O	N	T		S	P	A	Y	S	
		O	D	D		T	W	O		
E	S	S	E	N		E	S	A	U	
B	R	A		C	U	B		A	S	P
E	M	U	L	A	T	E		U	S	S
F	I	R	E	D		A	G	R	E	E
I	N	U	S	E		C	O	U	N	T
T	E	S	T	S		H	O	S	T	S

Yesterday's answer

- ACROSS**
- 41 Pluto's realm
 - 1 Store event
 - 5 Boxer's bane
 - 10 School events
 - 12 Arbitrary stranger, in slang
 - 13 Construct
 - 14 Praise highly
 - 15 Cart puller
 - 16 Tire track
 - 18 Clumsy one
 - 19 Petty officer
 - 21 Peach parts
 - 22 Grows rapidly
 - 24 City square
 - 25 Rink wear
 - 29 Fancy button
 - 30 Chooses
 - 32 Ruin
 - 33 Pindar poem
 - 34 Film composer Francis
 - 35 Patriot Ethan
 - 37 Before, in Bordeaux
 - 39 Colander's kin
 - 40 Confiscate
- DOWN**
- 1 Aerosol output
 - 2 Comes up
 - 3 Enters a password, perhaps
 - 4 Running bird
 - 5 Stew
 - 6 Not strict
 - 7 Require as a result
 - 8 Takes on
 - 9 Sneaker parts
 - 11 Stretches out
 - 17 Like cookie dough in ice cream
 - 20 Scooter's kin
 - 21 China piece
 - 23 Funnel-shaped flowers
 - 25 Roma's land
 - 26 Drawn up into a ball
 - 27 Bakery treat
 - 28 Poem part
 - 29 Huge hit
 - 31 Locales
 - 33 Addition column
 - 36 Preceding time
 - 38 Geese formation

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9
10				11		12			
13						14			
15				16	17			18	
19			20				21		
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	25	26					27	28	
29					30				31
32				33				34	
35			36			37	38		
39						40			
41							42		

1-13

A X Y D L B A A X R
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

1-13

CRYPTOQUOTE

U T Q F D T P R H J Y U T N P W Y T

U T Q R W G G Q N G W R U C X J O Q

H J U T Q D H J U Q N . — H U X Z H X J

B N P E Q N S

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: STAY AWAY FROM WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN, AND LOOK AT WHAT CAN BE. — MARSHA PETRIE SUE

Scientists explain why the record-shattering 2023 heat has them on edge



Maruja Inquilla walks on a dried out portion of Lake Titicaca in Coata, Peru, Wednesday, Nov. 29, 2023, amid a heat wave.

Associated Press

By SETH BORENSTEIN
AP Science Writer

The latest calculations from several science agencies showing Earth obliterated global heat records last year may seem scary. But scientists worry that what's behind those numbers could be even worse.

The Associated Press asked more than three dozen scientists in interviews and emails what the smashed records mean. Most said they fear acceleration of climate change that is already right at the edge of the 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 Fahrenheit) increase since pre-industrial times that nations had hoped to stay within.

"The heat over the last calendar year was a dramatic message from Mother Nature," said University of Arizona climate scientist Katharine Jacobs. Scientists say warming air and water is making deadly and costly heat waves, floods, droughts, storms and wildfires more intense and more likely. This last year was a doozy. Average global temperatures broke the previous record by a little more than a quarter of a degree (0.15 degrees Cel-

sus), a big margin, according to calculations Friday from two top American science agencies, the British meteorological service and a private group founded by a climate skeptic. Several of the scientists who made the calculations said the climate behaved in strange ways in 2023. They wonder whether human-caused climate change and a natural El Nino were augmented by a freak blip or whether "there's something more systematic afoot," as NASA climate scientist Gavin Schmidt put it including a much-debated acceleration of warming. A partial answer may not come until late spring or early summer. That's when a strong El Nino the cyclical warming of Pacific Ocean waters that affects global weather patterns is expected to fade away. If ocean temperatures, including deep waters, keep setting records well into the summer, like in 2023, that would be an ominous clue, they say.

Nearly every scientist who responded to AP's questions blamed greenhouse gases from the burning of fossil fuels as the over-

whelmingly largest reason the world hit temperatures that human civilization has not likely seen before. El Nino, which is bordering on "very strong," is the second-biggest factor, with other conditions far behind, they said.

The trouble with 2023, NASA's Schmidt said, is "it was a very strange year ... The more you dig into it, the less clear it seems."

One part of that is the timing for when 2023's big burst of heat began, according to Schmidt and Samantha Burgess, deputy director of Europe's Copernicus Climate Service, which earlier this week put warming at 1.48 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial times.

Temperatures are typically highest above normal in late winter and spring, they said.

But 2023's highest heat kicked in around June and lingered at record levels for months.

Deep ocean heat, a big player in global temperatures, behaved in a similar way, Burgess said.

Former NASA climate scientist James Hansen, often considered the godfather of global warming science, theorized last year that warming was accelerating.

While many of the scientists contacted by AP said they suspect it is happening, others were adamant that evidence so far supports only a steady and long-predicted increase.

"However, this too is largely in line with predictions" that warming would accelerate at a certain point, especially when particle pollution in the air decreases. The U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration calculated that Earth in 2023 had an average temperature of 59.12 degrees (15.08 degrees Celsius). That's 0.27 degrees (0.15 degrees Celsius) warmer than the previous record set in 2016 and 2.43 degrees (1.35 degrees Celsius) warmer than pre-industrial temperatures. □

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Grubhub agrees to a \$3.5 million settlement with Massachusetts for fees charged during the pandemic



In this April 4, 2014 file photo, a sign with the old GrubHub logo is displayed on the door to a New York restaurant. Associated Press

By **STEVE LeBLANC**
Associated Press

BOSTON (AP) — Massachusetts Attorney General Andrea Campbell announced a \$3.5 million settlement Friday with the online food delivery service platform Grubhub. The settlement resolves a 2021 lawsuit brought by Campbell alleging Grubhub illegally overcharged fees to Massachusetts restaurants in violation of a state fee cap put in place during the COVID-19 public health emergency. Under the terms of the settlement, Grubhub will pay a combined total of over \$3.5 million to impacted restaurants, Campbell said. Grubhub will also pay \$125,000 to the state. "Grubhub unlawfully overcharged and took advantage of restaurants during

a public health emergency that devastated much of this industry," Campbell said in a statement. A spokesperson for the company said serving restaurants is "at the heart of everything Grubhub does." "Our success depends on these valuable merchant partners. While we have always complied with Massachusetts' temporary price control, we're ready to move forward from this situation and continue providing Massachusetts restaurants with the best possible service," the spokesperson said in a written statement. Grubhub contracts with restaurants to provide online customer ordering and delivery services and charges fees to contracted restaurants per customer order. The fees are generally charged as a certain

percentage of the restaurant menu price of each order. Massachusetts declared a public health state of emergency during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. During the emergency — when public traffic to restaurants plummeted and diners increasingly relied on delivery — lawmakers approved legislation barring Grubhub and other third-party delivery service platforms from charging fees to restaurants exceeding 15% of an order's restaurant menu price. The fee cap remained in effect between Jan. 14, 2021, and June 15, 2021, when former Gov. Charlie Baker lifted the state of emergency in Massachusetts. The AG's lawsuit, filed in July 2021, alleged Grubhub repeatedly violated the 15% fee cap by regularly charging fees of 18% or more, leading to signifi-

cant financial harm to restaurants by often raising their operational costs by thousands of dollars. In March 2023, Suffolk Superior Court ruled in favor of the state. The ruling indicated Grubhub's conduct had violated both the 15% statutory fee cap and the state's primary consumer protection statute, according to Campbell. □



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Soto gets record \$31 million, 1-year deal with Yankees. Guerrero asks for \$19.9M from Blue Jays

By RONALD BLUM
AP Baseball Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Juan Soto and the New York Yankees agreed Thursday to a \$31 million, one-year contract that broke Shohei Ohtani's record for an arbitration-eligible player.

Toronto slugger Vladimir Guerrero Jr. filed for \$19.9 million, the high among 23 players who exchanged figures with their teams among 194 eligible for arbitration at the start of the day.

Among the 171 others who agreed to deals were New York Mets first baseman Pete Alonso (\$20.5 million), Milwaukee right-hander Corbin Burnes (\$15,637,500), Atlanta left-hander Max Fried (\$15 million), Yankees second baseman Gleyber Torres (\$14.2 million), Cleveland right-hander Shane Bieber (\$13,125,000), Milwaukee shortstop Willy Adames (\$12.25 million), Houston left-hander Framber Valdez (\$12.1 million), Astros outfielder Kyle Tucker (\$12 million), Baltimore outfielder Anthony Santander



San Diego Padres' Juan Soto follows the flight of his two-run home run against Colorado Rockies starting pitcher Kyle Freeland in the third inning of a baseball game, Wednesday, Aug. 2, 2023, in Denver.

(\$11.7 million), Arizona first baseman Christian Walker (\$10.9 million) and Diamondbacks right-hander Zac Gallen (\$10,011,000). Soto had a \$23 million salary last year in his only full season with San Diego and

can become a free agent after this season, when he will be 26. Soto hit .275 with 35 homers, 109 RBIs and a .930 OPS last year with the Padres, who obtained him from Washington on Aug. 2, 2022, after he turned down

a \$440 million, 15-year offer from the Nationals. Soto was acquired by the Yankees from the Padres last month. Ohtani played last season under a \$30 million, one-year contract with the Los Angeles Angels, a deal

Associated Press

agreed to in October 2022. He became a free agent after last year's World Series and signed a record \$700 million, 10-year contract with the Los Angeles Dodgers.

Toronto offered Guerrero a raise from \$14.5 million to \$18.05 million. The three-time All-Star hit .264 with 26 homers and 94 RBIs, and is eligible for free agency after the 2025 season.

Adolis García, a postseason star with Texas, had the largest gap at \$1.9 million. The outfielder asked for a raise to \$6.9 million from \$747,600, and the World Series champion Rangers offered \$5 million.

Two-time batting champion Luis Arraez asked Miami for a raise to \$12 million from \$6.1 million after winning his hearing last year, and the Marlins offered the second baseman \$10.6 million.

Right-hander Casey Mize and Detroit had the smallest gap at \$25,000. The pitcher asked for a raise to \$840,000 from \$734,200 and the Tigers offered \$815,000. □

Alabama is close to hiring Kalen DeBoer from Washington to replace Nick Saban, AP source says

By RALPH RUSSO
AP College Football Writer

Alabama is negotiating with Washington coach Kalen DeBoer and is close to hiring him as the replacement for Nick Saban, a person with direct knowledge of the talks said Friday.

The person spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because a deal was not completed yet. The talks were first reported by ESPN.

DeBoer, 49, is a former NAIA coach who led Washington to the national championship game in just his second season.

DeBoer would replace Saban, who announced his retirement Wednesday after leading the Crimson Tide to six national championships in 17 seasons.

DeBoer signed an extension after going 11-2 in 2022, raising his salary to \$4.2 million with incremental increases to \$4.8 million in the last year of the con-

tract in 2028. It also included an increased buyout of \$12 million if DeBoer left for a new job.

Washington offered a seven-year deal worth an

average of \$9.4 million annually to keep DeBoer, the person with knowledge of the situation said.

Athletic director Troy Dannen has said he first approached the coach about a new contract in October, soon after leaving Tulane for the Washington job.

DeBoer hired high-powered agent Jimmy Sexton, who also represents Saban, last year. Saban received an eight-year deal in 2022 worth at least \$93.6 million, including some \$11.1 million this year.

DeBoer had a scheduled in-studio appearance with KJR-FM Washington's flagship station scheduled for Friday morning. The station announced about two hours prior to the appear-

ance that DeBoer would not be coming on the air.

The fast-rising DeBoer led the Huskies to a 14-1 record that included a Pac-12 championship before losing to No. 1 Michigan 34-13 in the national title game. He was named The Associated Press coach of the year.

DeBoer led the Huskies to a 25-3 record in two seasons after taking over a program that was 4-8 in 2021.

DeBoer led his alma mater Sioux Falls to a 67-3 record from 2005-09 and won three NAIA championships at the small, Baptist-affiliated school in South Dakota's largest city. He later had immediate success at Fresno State, going 12-6 in two seasons from 2020-21. □



Washington head coach Kalen DeBoer watches during the first half of the national championship NCAA College Football Playoff game against Michigan Monday, Jan. 8, 2024, in Houston.

Associated Press

NFL All-Pro: McCaffrey, Hill, Warner unanimous; 14 first-timers

By **ROB MAADDI**
AP Sports Writer

Christian McCaffrey, Tyreek Hill and Fred Warner are unanimous choices for The Associated Press 2023 NFL All-Pro Team.

The 49ers' McCaffrey and Warner and the Dolphins' Hill received first-team votes from all 50 members of a nationwide panel of media members who regularly cover the league.

"No freakin' way," Warner said of being a unanimous pick for his third selection overall. "Wow, that's special."

Running back McCaffrey and linebacker Warner are joined by three San Francisco teammates: left tackle Trent Williams, fullback Kyle Juszczyk and tight end George Kittle.

Baltimore quarterback Lamar Jackson earned his second All-Pro selection, receiving 45 first-place votes. Dallas' Dak Prescott and San Francisco's Brock Purdy each received two first-place votes and Buffalo's Josh Allen got the other one.

Los Angeles Rams defensive tackle Aaron Donald becomes an eight-time pick, tied for most by a defensive player and tied for fifth-most overall. Cowboys right guard Zack Martin is a seven-time choice and Eagles center Jason Kelce earned his sixth selection. Fourteen players are first-



San Francisco 49ers running back Christian McCaffrey (23) runs up against Washington Commanders safety Kamren Curl (31) during the first half of an NFL football game, Sunday, Dec. 31, 2023, in Landover, Md.

timers, including three from NFC East champion Dallas: wide receiver CeeDee Lamb, who missed being a unanimous choice by one vote; cornerback DaRon Bland and kicker Brandon Aubrey.

"It's very rewarding," said Lamb, who led the NFL with 135 receptions and had 1,749 yards receiving to go with 12 touchdowns. "Obviously, all the hard work has paid off. It's humbling also." Tampa Bay safety Antoine Winfield Jr., Detroit wide receiver Amon-Ra St. Brown and New York Jets linebacker Quincy Williams

each snubbed for the Pro Bowl made the All-Pro team.

"That's the highest of them all so it's an honor but I got to keep working," said St. Brown, who helped the Lions win their first division title in 30 years.

Winfield had six forced fumbles, six sacks, four fumble recoveries and three interceptions this season, becoming just the fourth player with at least five sacks and seven takeaways since sacks became a stat in 1982. He edged Atlanta's Jessie Bates by two points. "Coming into the season,

it was one of my goals," said Winfield, who forced a game-changing turnover in the Buccaneers' division-clinching victory last week. "I put the work in and it's just cool to see how everything played out. I'm blessed." Williams' younger brother and teammate, defensive tackle Quinnen Williams, was an All-Pro last season. "That's a big accomplishment," Quincy Williams said. "Grateful for the work I put in. This is amazing." Hill made it for the fifth time, fourth as a wideout, after leading the league with 1,799 yards receiving. Pitts-

Associated Press

burgh edge T.J. Watt, who led the NFL with 19 sacks, earned his fourth selection, and Cleveland edge Myles Garrett got his third.

McCaffrey made it for a second time following an outstanding all-around season. He ran for 1,459 yards and 14 TDs and caught 67 passes for 567 yards and seven scores. Kittle also got his second selection as the 49ers earned the NFC's No. 1 seed.

"If you would've told my 6-year-old self that I was going to have that opportunity at some point, I'd be incredibly happy," Kittle said. "My goal every single year is to be great at every aspect of being tight end because I think it's the most fun position."

Jackson also was an All-Pro in 2019 when he was the NFL MVP. He helped the Ravens (13-4) finish with the best record in the league this year and the AFC's No. 1 seed while playing his best in the biggest games against the best teams. The Ravens had 10 wins against teams with a winning record. Jackson finished with 3,678 yards passing and 24 TDs and also ran for 821 yards and five scores.

Lions right tackle Penei Sewell, Chiefs slot cornerback Trent McDuffie and left guard Joe Thuney and Ravens safety Kyle Hamilton are among the first-timers. □

Forward Nick Foligno agrees to new 2-year contract with the Chicago Blackhawks

By **JAY COHEN**
AP Sports Writer

CHICAGO (AP) — Nick Foligno and the Chicago Blackhawks have agreed to a two-year contract, extending the relationship between the popular forward and his fifth NHL team.

The team announced the deal on Friday. It runs through the 2025-26 season and carries a \$4.5 million salary-cap hit. The 36-year-old Foligno has eight goals and nine assists in 39 games this season. He was placed on injured reserve last week after he fractured a finger in a fight

with New Jersey defenseman Brendan Smith, who had leveled Connor Bedard with a big hit that broke the rookie center's jaw.

Chicago acquired Foligno in a trade with Boston in June, and he agreed to a \$4 million, one-year contract with the Blackhawks. He had 10 goals and 16 assists in 60 games with the Bruins last season. The Blackhawks brought in Foligno to provide a veteran presence and help mentor Bedard, the No. 1 overall pick in last year's NHL draft. While Chicago is playing without a captain this season, Foligno

has become one of the team's most important leaders on and off the ice.

"The impact Nick has already had on our team in such a short time is a testament to his work ethic and dedication to helping the players around him succeed," Blackhawks general manager Kyle Davidson said in the release announcing the deal. "Hardworking on the ice, the energy he brings every night and his versatility to play in any situation have been tremendous assets."

Foligno was selected by Ottawa in the first round of the



Chicago Blackhawks left wing Nick Foligno (17) takes a shot from behind the goal as Dallas Stars goaltender Scott Wedgewood (41) defends in the second period of an NHL hockey game, Sunday, Dec. 31, 2023, in Dallas.

Associated Press

2006 draft. His father, Mike, played in the NHL for 15 years, and his brother, Marcus, plays for Minnesota. Nick Foligno broke into the

league with the Senators in 2007. He has 223 goals and 319 assists in 1,120 regular-season games, also playing for Columbus and Toronto. □

Weekly SPECIALS



<p>WAS \$41.71</p> <p>\$39.99</p> <p>Per KG</p>  <p>Angus Rib Eye Steak</p>	<p>WAS \$18.85</p> <p>\$16.57</p> <p>Per KG</p>  <p>Angus Cutsmeat</p>	<p>WAS \$14.28</p> <p>\$10.85</p> <p>Per KG</p>  <p>Bloemstuk</p>	<p>WAS \$14.85</p> <p>\$10.28</p> <p>Per KG</p>  <p>Soppi/Boneless Soupmeat</p>
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<p>WAS \$2.74</p> <p>\$2.05</p> <p>Each</p>  <p>Toufayan Pita Bread Whole Wheat 12oz</p>	<p>WAS \$1.88</p> <p>\$1.71</p> <p>Each</p>  <p>Starkist Chunk Light Water Can 5oz</p>	<p>WAS \$2.39</p> <p>\$2.17</p> <p>Each</p>  <p>Goodburry Luncheon Meat Chicken 340gr</p>	<p>WAS \$1.99</p> <p>\$1.71</p> <p>Each</p>  <p>Spar Flour Tortilla Wraps 370gr</p>	<p>WAS \$2.22</p> <p>\$1.94</p> <p>Each</p>  <p>Goodburry Cherry/Strawberry Spread 450gr</p>
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DIARY/FROZEN

<p>WAS \$5.11</p> <p>\$3.86</p> <p>Each</p>  <p>Melkan Gouda Jong 48 plus 190gr</p>
<p>WAS \$3.14</p> <p>\$2.43</p> <p>Each</p>  <p>Gwoon Frites 1KG</p>

HBC/GM

<p>WAS \$4.45</p> <p>\$3.42</p> <p>Each</p>  <p>Colgate Toothpaste Cavity Regular Flavor 4oz</p>
<p>WAS \$3.31</p> <p>\$2.85</p> <p>Each</p>  <p>Palmolive Scheercreme -Classic 100ml</p>

DELI/BAKERY

<p>WAS \$1.99</p> <p>\$1.71</p> <p>100 GR</p>  <p>Dushi Criollo Queso Paoa</p>
<p>WAS \$2.05</p> <p>\$1.77</p> <p>100 GR</p>  <p>Smoked Honey Ham</p>

DRY FOOD

<p>WAS \$1.59</p> <p>\$1.31</p> <p>Each</p>  <p>Zottis Vruchten Yoghurt Assorted 400gr</p>	<p>WAS \$2.45</p> <p>\$1.71</p> <p>Each</p>  <p>Gwoon Bescuit Naturel 125gr</p>	<p>WAS \$4.68</p> <p>\$2.28</p> <p>Each</p>  <p>Jet Puffed Marshmallows 12oz</p>	<p>WAS \$4.68</p> <p>\$3.42</p> <p>Each</p>  <p>EE Traditional Pasta Sauce 24oz</p>	<p>WAS \$3.77</p> <p>\$3.42</p> <p>Each</p>  <p>Spar Slaolie 1Ltr</p>
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